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ABSTRACT

This document consists of a 1996-97 final report of Youth Works*AmeriCorps (YW*AC) and a supplemental report with information collected by the Minnesota Department of Children, Families, and Learning. The final report provides information on the third year of collaboration among the Minnesota Commission on National and Community Service, individual YW*AC programs, and University of Minnesota Evaluation Team across five reporting areas: demographic profile of Members, services provided to the state, impact of service on members, efforts to improve capacity for self evaluation and reporting within programs, and cost benefit analysis. Positive results are cited: Minnesota has a diverse, gender-fair, well-educated corps; services to Minnesotans are increasing each year; the service experience continues to have a significant impact on members; and programs continue to operate in a cost-effective manner. The second report provides material on the Minnesota Commission on National and Community Service, describes service program partners, and profiles YW*AC. It includes overviews of the following YW*AC programs: Minneapolis Public Schools/Community Education; St. Paul Future Force; Minnesota Conservation Corps; Minnesota Department of Economic Security: MN Serve; Multicultural Communities in Action: Neighborhood House; Pillsbury Neighborhood Services; Partners in Service to America: Red Lake Tribal Council; Southern Minnesota YW*AC; Twin Cities Youth and Housing Initiative; Volunteers in Service to America; and national AC programs for seniors, K-12, and higher education. (YLB)

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ED 425 306

# Youth Works Final Report
# Youth Works-Americorps Final Report
# Report to the Legislature

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MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF

Children, Families & Learning

**COMMISSIONER:**
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# YOUTH WORKS FINAL REPORT

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Report
to the
Legislature

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MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND LEARNING

# YOUTH WORKS FINAL REPORT

## *Estimated Cost of Preparing this Report*

This report required the collection of information which MN Children does not collect as a part of its normal business functions. It was therefore necessary to gather and analyze information in order to prepare this report. Therefore, the cost of preparing this report includes estimates of MN Children information collection costs as well as the estimated costs of the providers of information.

## *Funding for this Report:*

The Legislature appropriated $100,000 for the preparation of this report and the ongoing evaluation of the program. The report focuses on the long term effect of Youth Works/ AmeriCorps participants, on organizations and communities, especially as they relate to changes in behavior involving career choices, personal conduct and active practice of citizenship by members and the positive impact on communities. This study involves the use of surveys and interviews to collect data for Youth Works/AmeriCorps participants one and two years from program participation and an analysis of annual accomplishments by programs.

## *Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning Costs:*

| | |
|---|---|
| The following is an estimate of the cost incurred by the Minnesota Department of Children, Families & Learning: | $16,053 |

## *Other Agency Costs:*

| | |
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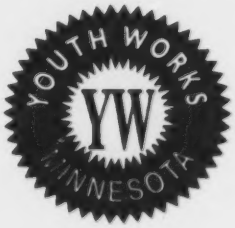
|---|---|
| **TOTAL ESTIMATED COST FOR PREPARING THIS REPORT:** | **$16,053** |




# YOUTHWORKS•AMERICORPS EVALUATION PROJECT

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 1996-1997

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January 1998

# 1996-97 YOUTHWORKS•AMERICORPS EVALUATION
# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report represents the third year of collaboration between the Minnesota Commission on National and Community Service, individual YouthWorks•AmeriCorps (YW•AC) programs, and the University of Minnesota Evaluation Team. YW•AC continued its steady march forward: programs with a few years under their belts were able to run with less effort than in the initial two years. This year's report provides information on five areas: a demographic profile of Members, the kinds of service provided to the state, the impact of service on Members, the efforts to improve capacity for self-evaluation and reporting within programs, and a cost benefit analysis. There were positive results across these reporting areas. Generally speaking, Minnesota has a diverse, gender fair, well educated Corps. The services provided to the people of the state, especially in areas of education and the environment, are increasing each year and the service experience continues to have a significant impact on Members. Programs also continue to operate in a cost effective manner across most categories .

## THE 1996-97 YW•AC MEMBERS--WHO ARE THEY?[1]

The demographic profile suggests that the typical Minnesota YW•AC Member is a White, non-Hispanic male or female, age 21-29, with at least a high school diploma and probably some college education as well. The following sections detail the demographic description of

[1] All figures for completed terms of service were provided by the Minnesota Commission on National and Community Service; figures for total enrollment are based on data collected and numbers calculated by the University evaluation team.

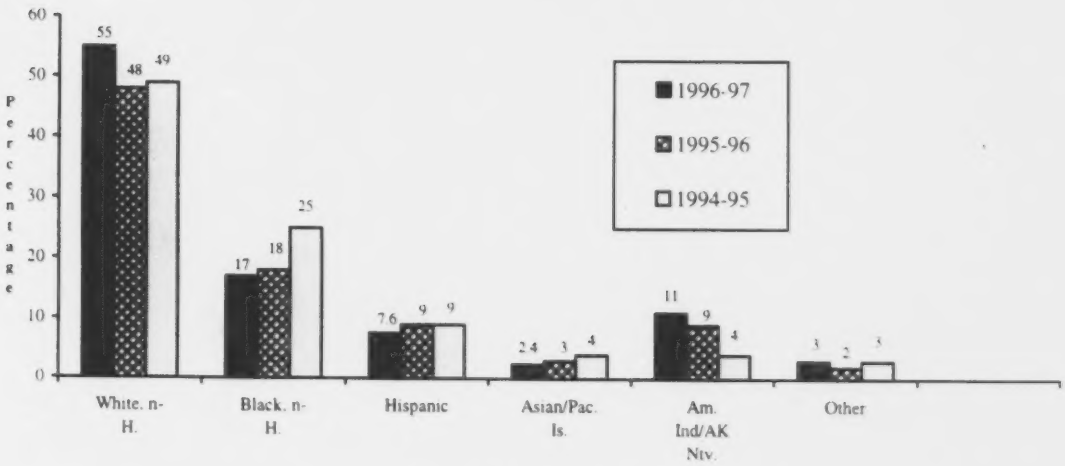
YW•AC Members by gender, racial-ethnic identification, age, and educational attainment. Unless otherwise stated data were collected from enrollment forms completed at entry into the program.

**Racial/Ethnic Identification**[2]

The people who enroll as YW•AC Members continue to come from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. Almost half (42%) of the 1996-97 Members identified themselves as non-White, yet this was slightly less than in previous years. Conversely, the proportion of White, non-Hispanic Members was larger than in the past two years, comprising 55% of the total number of 1996-97 Members. Among the 42% non-White groups, some trends are emerging. The proportion of American Indians enrolling as Members continues to rise, increasing from 4% to 9% to 11% over the past three years. They represent the only non-White group on the rise. The proportion of African Americans has continued to decrease slightly over the last three years from 25% to 18% to 17%. Seven and a half percent of Members identified themselves as Hispanic which represents a slight decrease over the past two years. The percentage of Asian American Members has decreased by almost half since 1994-95 to 2.4% in 1996-7. Figure 1 illustrates enrolling YW•AC Members racial-ethnic identification for program years 1994-1997.

[2] This information comes from 1996 data collected from the Minnesota State Demographer's Office. The names used for racial and ethnic categories in the tables and charts are those used in the state and national census. The Census Bureau and the State Demographer's Office state that "minority category is all people except non-Hispanic whites...people of Hispanic origin can be of any race."

**FIGURE 1**
**RACIAL/ETHNIC IDENTIFICATION FOR PROGRAM YEARS 1994-1996**
**(TOTAL ENROLLMENT)**




Racial/Ethnic Identification

If we compare the racial/ethnic identification of total Members who enrolled with the racial/ethnic identification of the Members who went on to complete their term of service, it is evident that the Corps becomes slightly more predominantly White, non-Hispanic. The largest decrease in percentages comes in Black, non-Hispanic and American Indian/AK Native groups. Table 1 shows a comparison between the racial/ethnic identification of total Member enrollment and Members who completed their term of service.

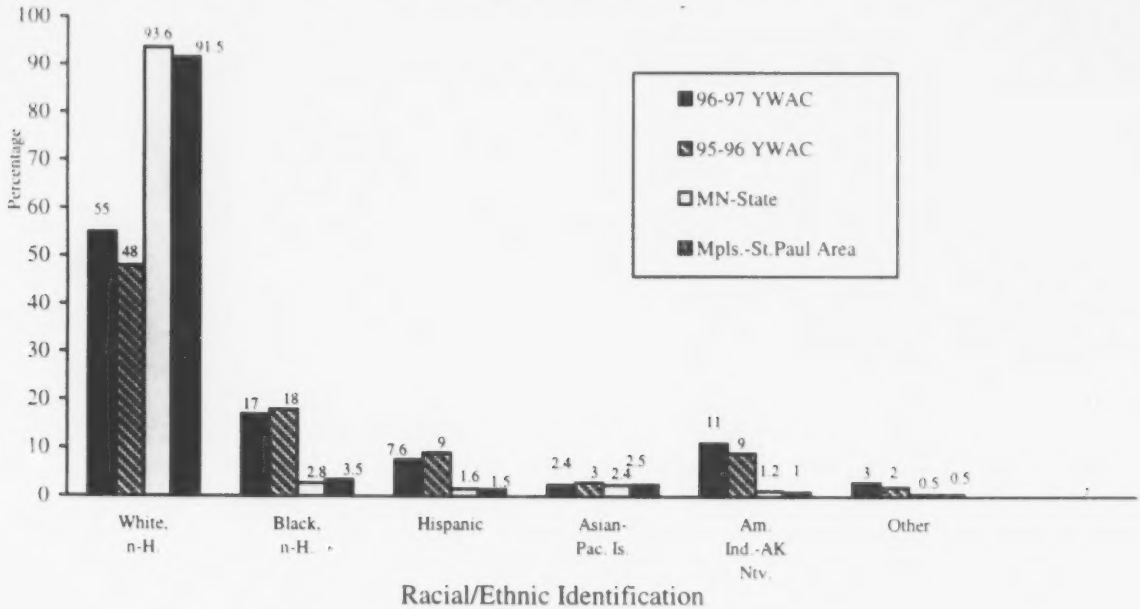
**TABLE 1**
**RACE**
**TOTAL MEMBERS ENROLLED AND TOTAL MEMBERS COMPLETING SERVICE**

| Race | 1996-97 total enrollment N=589 (%) | 1996-97 completed service N=376 |
|---|---|---|
| White, non-Hispanic | 55 | 60.4 |
| Black, non-Hispanic | 17 | 13.7 |
| Hispanic | 7.6 | 7.5 |
| Asian/Pac. Islander | 2.4 | 2.9 |
| American Indian/AK Native | 11 | 8.5 |

Although these decreases in diversity are not necessarily desirable, compared to the overall distribution of racial-ethnic diversity in the state and metropolitan area, the Corps still maintains a strong level of diversity. Across the state,[3] 93.6% of the population identify themselves as White, non-Hispanics and 91.5% within the metro area. As mentioned, collectively, racial-ethnic minorities constitute approximately 42% of all YW•AC Members. This is still a considerably higher percentage than the approximately 8% of racial-ethnic minorities within the statewide population. African Americans represent 17% of the total Member population while they comprise only about 3% of the state population. The proportion of Latinos (Hispanics) and the proportion of American Indians represented in YW•AC is also significantly higher than represented in the overall population distribution. The number of Asian American Members, though down by 50% from its level last year, is now at a rate consistent with the overall Asian American population in the state. Figure 2 shows a comparison of the racial-ethnic identification of the Minnesota YW•AC Members, the state population, and the metro area population.

[3] This information comes from 1996 data collected from the Minnesota State demographers office

**FIGURE 2**
**RACIAL/ETHNIC DISTRIBUTION FOR MEMBERS COMPARED TO STATE AND MPLS/ST. PAUL AREA POPULATION (TOTAL ENROLLMENT)**




## Gender

For the 1996-97 program year YW•AC Members were almost evenly split between female (50.1%) and male (49.9%) participants. This represents the most equal distribution of gender to date in enrolling Members. Figure 3 shows the trend in gender of enrolling YW•AC Members since 1994.

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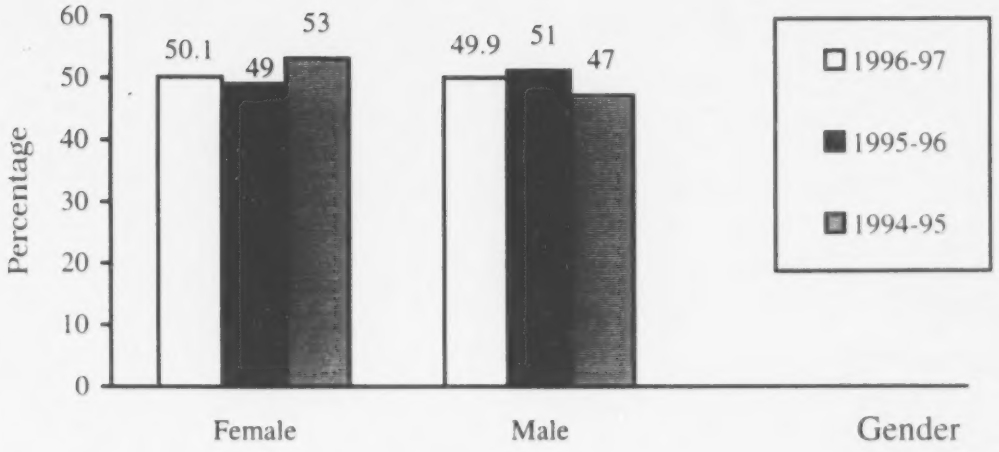
**FIGURE 3**
**GENDER OF MEMBERS SINCE 1994**
**(TOTAL ENROLLMENT)**




If we look at the gender composition of only the Members who stay to complete their term of service, we find that there is shift away from gender parity toward a Corps that is more female than male by 10%. Table 2 provides a comparison of gender rates.

**TABLE 2**
**GENDER OF 1996-97 MEMBERS**

| Gender | 1996-1997 total enrollment N=589 | 1996-1997 total completed terms N=386 |
|---|---|---|
| FEMALE | 50.1 % | 55.7% |
| MALE | 49.9% | 44.3% |

**Age Distribution**

The age distribution for 1996-97 Members reflects a decline in the number of Members age 20 or younger and a sharp increase in the number of Members between ages 21-29. There is a very slight change in the age distribution of Members in the completed term of service

category, with a drop in the number of Members under age 20 and a slight increase in those over 21. Table 3 shows the distribution of Members' ages over the past three years.

**TABLE 3**
**AGE DISTRIBUTION OF MEMBERS SINCE 1994**

| Age Range | 1996-97 completed terms N=386 (%) | 1996-97 total enrollment N=589 (%) | 1995-96 total enrollment (%) | 1994-95 total enrollment (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 20 and Under | 23 | 27 | 30 | 43 |
| 21-29 | 65 | 63 | 49 | 49 |
| 30 and Over | 11 | 10 | 10 | 7 |

As noted in earlier reports, there is often a risk for programs such as YouthWorks to lose its younger, more "at-risk" Members in exchange for older, more experienced individuals. There is some evidence discussed in Chapter 3 which suggests that those Members typically targeted by YouthWorks need additional attention or support in the program because they are more vulnerable given the low stipend, and problems accessing the health benefits and child care. It may be that the program is not attracting as many young, non-high school graduated applicants because YW•AC does not offer them enough or consistent benefits to survive given their life circumstances prior to entering the program.

**Education Level**

In keeping with the increases reported last year, the education levels of Members entering YW•AC service are higher again this year. The 1996-97 YW•AC had more Members entering with a completed high school degree, with some college education, or with a college degree. The other categories of educational level showed a very slight decrease, remaining essentially the same. This information is consistent with increase in the number of Members entering service at

ages 21-29 for the 1996-97 year, as Members at those ages might be more likely to have completed high school and possibly entered college. Again, when rates are compared between total enrollment and Members who stay to complete their term of service, the figures indicate that Members with the least amount of education are not staying in to complete their term of service. Table 4 shows the distribution of education levels for entering Members for the past three years.

**TABLE 4**
**EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF MEMBERS FOR 1994-1996**

| Educational Level | 1994-95 total enrollment (%) | 1995-96 total enrollment (%) | 1996-97 total enrollment (%) N=589 | 1996-97 completed term (%) N=386 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Less than High School Degree (Working Toward Completion) | 23 | 22 | 16 | 11 |
| High School Diploma | 21 | 17 | 24 | 22 |
| GED | 7 | 5 | 6 | 3 |
| Technical School/Apprenticeships | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| Some College | 17 | 18 | 24 | 25 |
| Associate Degree | 4 | 3 | 5 | 5 |
| College Degree | 13 | 14 | 18 | 23 |
| Graduate Study | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| Graduate Degree | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| No information available | 10 | 13 | 2 | 1 |

Regarding high school/GED completion rates, there were a total of 75 Members seeking a high school diploma or GED in the 1996-97 year. Of those, 47, or 62%, completed their GED or received a high school diploma. This is the highest rate in the three years of this report.

**Retention Rates**

The overall program retention rate for the 1996-97 year was 66%. Of the 589 individuals who enrolled, 375 fulfilled their service and received an education award while 179, or almost 34%, left the program before completing their service and were not eligible for an education award. There were 14 Members who terminated their service early but qualified for a partial award. Data for the type of termination were missing for 21 Members.[4] Research indicates that "historically successful service programs" are able to maintain a retention rate of between approximately 1/3 to 2/3 of their enrolling Members with the single most successful program documented at a retention rate of 67%. (Moskos, 1988; Shumer & Maland Cady, 1997). Thus the 1996-97 Minnesota YW•AC retention rate is well within that "typical" range of what should be considered successful.

Examining the retention rate by gender, race/ethnicity, education level and age reveals some significant relationships. According to chi-square tests for independence,[5] the type of termination of service, [1) completed service and eligible for an education award; 2) terminated for cause and not eligible; and 3) terminated for compelling reason and eligible for a partial award] was related individually to race, gender, and education level, but NOT to age. There was also no statistical relationship between the type of termination of service and the program in which the Member enrolled.

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[4] There are some slight discrepancies between the rates calculated by the Commission staff and the University of Minnesota due to differences in data entry and inconsistencies in acquiring data forms. The Commission calculates a retention rate of 64.7%.

[5] Race: X-sq (21, n=589)=55.08128 p=0.0001. Gender: X-sq(6,N=589)=27.74002 p=0.0001 Ed. Level: X-sq(27, N=589)=91.01564 p=0.00001

Looking at the race category and early termination, a quarter or more of each racial group including Whites, are leaving the program. Table 5 shows the percentages of racial/ethnic groups that are dropping out of the program.

**TABLE 5**
**RATES OF EARLY TERMINATION OF SERVICE BY RACIAL/ETHNIC GROUP**

| Racial/Ethnic Group | Percentage of enrolling Members in that racial/ethnic group that leave the program. |
|---|---|
| Black, non-Hispanic | 39% |
| Hispanic | 25% |
| Asian | 21% |
| American Indian | 50% |
| White, non-Hispanic | 24% |

From Table 5 we can see that the highest percentages of racial/ethnic groups leaving the program are African Americans and American Indians.

In terms of gender, more men do not complete their term of service than women. That is, 25% of women who enrolled did not complete their service while 35% of the men did not complete their service.

Regarding education levels, the program is losing the most Members from all categories not related to college education and especially Members in the lower three educational tiers. The highest percentage of early termination of service were those Members with a GED (60%) followed by those with less than a high school diploma (46%). 36% of enrolling Members with a high school diploma and 27% of those with some college education terminated their service early. Table 6 provides the data for education level.

**TABLE 6**

**EDUCATION LEVEL AND EARLY TERMINATION OF SERVICE**

| Educational Level | Percent of enrolling Members with that level who terminated their service early. |
|---|---|
| Less than High School Degree (working toward completion) | 46% |
| High School Diploma | 36% |
| GED | 60% |
| Technical School/Apprenticeships | 33% |
| Some College | 27% |
| Associate Degree | 20% |
| College Degree | 11% |
| Some Graduate Study | 1% |
| Graduate Degree | 1% |

It is very important to note that the chi square test of independence indicates only that some relationship exists between two characteristics individually. In this case it indicates and individual relationship between each of the characteristics of race, gender, and educational level with the type of termination of service. The tests do not show which factors are more significantly related than others, nor does it prove or disprove a combined relationship among them either. More sophisticated statistical tests and qualitative research would have to be conducted to shed light on those issues. In fact, the frequency rates cited above in combination with the chi square tests suggest that more detailed investigation should be done. A further discussion of these issues continues in the conclusion.

## THE YW•AC IMPACT

**Contributions to the community:**
**Impacts on individuals, organizations, and neighborhoods**

YW•AC Members logged a total of **675,153.3** hours of service to Minnesota communities from September 1996 through August 1997. Full time YW•AC Members provided **524,815.9** hours of service and part-time Members provided **150,337.4** hours of service to Minnesota. This is an 18% increase over the total hours of service provided in the 1995-96 program year.

YW•AC Members made important contributions to communities throughout Minnesota. Their accomplishments demonstrate the variety and importance of community service by the Corps. Following is a summary of the services provided by the nine programs in the state:

- YW•AC programs tutored or taught 31,550 K-12 age youth in the areas of school readiness skills, math, reading, language arts, ESL, community art, environmental education, health and safety, conflict resolution and completion of the high school diploma. This is more than double the number served last year.
- YW•AC programs provided child-care to 1602 children through programs for early childhood development, non-English speaking children, teenage parents in school, and school-aged children in a women's shelter, among others.
- In-school and out-of-school enrichment activities were provided to 20,456 school age youth.
- Over 2000 youth were mentored through YW•AC program activities.
- 1384 adults were supported by GED instruction, parenting classes, and citizenship classes.
- Community service efforts assisted 20,378 homeless in communities throughout Minnesota through shelter support; distribution of food, clothing, furniture, and toys; meals assistance; and support for homeless women. One program alone distributed 3.75 tons of food to 1000 families.
- An estimated 235,240 individuals in neighborhoods around the state benefited from community improvements such as water drainage clean-ups, neighborhood clean-ups, recycling programs, tree plantings, planting community gardens, and lead abatement programs. These activities included planting over 10,000 trees, recycling almost 9 tons of material, and collecting 75.61 tons of garbage, 124 tons of scrap metal, and 500 worn tires.
- Community-building activities addressing issues such as public safety, graffiti abatement, community fairs for immigrant populations, community "problem"

identification, violence awareness programs, and cross-cultural awareness programs served 7700 people.

- Environmental conservation efforts included planting 214,538 wildland trees; removing environmental risks from 137 acres of park/wilderness area; cleaning and/or maintaining over 35,000 miles of park trail; restoring 256 miles of rivers, beaches and fish habitat; repairing and maintaining 278 dam and flood control structures; restoring and conserving over 2500 acres of prairie, oak savanna, and fauna habitat.
- 10,000 individuals benefited from HIV/AIDS awareness programs, prenatal health services, immunization programs, health care education and support, independent living assistance, and chemical abuse counseling.
- Housing related services such as housing assessments and inspections, construction and rehabilitation of low-income homes and community buildings, weatherization of homes, and service, maintenance, and rehabilitation of senior citizens' homes served 7177 individuals.
- Job-skill and business development programs assisted 5629 individuals.
- 3135 youth participated in service-learning activities directed by YW•AC programs.
- YW•AC Members recruited 24,497 volunteers who contributed an additional 152,656.5 hours of volunteer service to their communities.

One of the most significant statewide projects that the Minnesota YW•AC organized was the Corps-wide Crookston-East Grand Forks flood relief service project in June 1997. Over 350 Members, program directors, their staff, and the Commission staff spent two days providing assistance to the families, community organizations, and relief workers in the region. As a 350 strong team, the YW•AC was able to provide support in every aspect of the relief effort from demolition and clean-up, to distribution of relief supplies, to child care, to meal preparation, to emotional support. The experience cemented a statewide *espirit de corps* and made YW•AC a visible presence in service to the state. Perhaps most importantly, the Corps presence underscored the ethic of service that characterizes citizens in the state of Minnesota. For all YW•AC participants the event was a touchstone experience. Below are two excerpts from directors' notes about the flood relief project:

> One of our weatherization crews participated in the flood relief effort in East Grand Forks and Crookston. While the entire program from around the state accomplished big things, it was this small crew who made a human connection with a home owner and her son who not only felt the ravaging of the flood but had also lost their husband and father to cancer the previous fall. The

crew provided their skills as well as instruction of their skills to the home owner. One bedroom was mudded and taped, one bedroom and bathroom were sheet rocked and, one bedroom partially sheet rocked and paneling hung in the family room,. The crew carried items from the garage so the homeowner could sort through to salvage family belongings and momentos. The crew knew the sense of accomplishment through community when they left this project.

The trip to Crookston and East Grand Forks significantly impacted our Members in terms of feeling part of a larger group and movement. They were impressed with the amount of work completed in a short period of time and were proud of their participation. This project also helped YW•AC recognition. The positive press and the sheer number attending was awesome.

As reported in earlier evaluations, the Minnesota YouthWorks•AmeriCorps continues to improve the kind, quality, and quantity of services available to communities across the state. For partner organizations the presence of YW•AC continues to:

- increase the quality of service provided
- allow them to offer expanded services
- increase collaboration among community organizations
- enable organizations to leverage resources for other staff
- enable them to collaborate and communicate more and more effectively together by sharing Members as common workers

The presence of YW•AC Members in organizations enhances those organizations' productivity and improves the manner in which organizations relate to one another. Moreover, Corps Members' presence continues to change the nature of work and personnel interactions in workplaces around the state.

In facilitating and improving the work of community organizations, YW•AC programs help to raise the quality of life across the state, especially for those living in challenging circumstances. By directly improving individuals' lives and by assisting individuals to change their own lives, and by building up links between individuals within communities and between Members and the community they serve, YW•AC continues to strengthen communities and to move community problems closer to resolution.

## Impacts on Members:
## Implications for service, citizenship, and work force participation

In keeping with earlier evaluation reports, participation in Youth Works•AmeriCorps continued to positively influence Members in the personal, professional, civic, and economic dimensions of their lives. Information about how the service experience affects Members came primarily from 3 sources: 1) all Members are required to fill out a short survey as part of their exit paperwork at the time they end their service; 2) 134 1995-96 alumni Members (45% return rate) responded to surveys regarding their reflections on their YW•AC experience six months to a year after completion of their service[6]; and 3) interviews were conducted with a small group of alumni and/or second-year Members which are reported in Chapter 3.

Responses from Member exit surveys and the alumni surveys for Year Three continue to support conclusions from earlier reports that the YW•AC service experience exerts a strong influence on individuals. Ninety-four percent of exiting Members were satisfied with their overall AmeriCorps experience and an overwhelming 94% indicated they would encourage friends to join an AmeriCorps program. Similarly, 96% of exiting Members were satisfied with the effect their work had had on the community in which they served.

As reported in previous years, the YW•AC experience can even be a life changing one. That change ranged from concrete developments such as improved communication skills or clarified career decisions to intangibles like more acceptance of diversity or a second chance at a meaningful life. For example, Matthew, an alumni Member wrote, "AmeriCorps gave me another chance and showed me that I could be a productive Member of society. Even after I had

[6] Of the 134 surveys returned, 40 of them were from the same program so the results here do not reflect a proportionate response by Members from all programs.

given up on society." Both exiting Members and alumni reported gains or benefits across a wide variety of topics which have been summarized below:

- personal development including an increased sense of responsibility for self, family, and community; improved self-confidence and self-esteem
- interpersonal and communication skills
- academic knowledge
- basic life skills
- job skills
- clarified educational and vocational goals
- education award
- better understanding/awareness of community needs and problems
- sense of connection to community
- citizenship development
- development of an ethic of service, commitment to service beyond YW•AC

The top four benefits that exiting 1996-97 Members reported they received from their YW•AC experience were:

1. Explored future jobs/educational interests (19%)
2. Learned about or worked with different ethnic/cultural groups (18%)
3. Made new friends (17%)
4. Served my community (13%)

If we compare the 1994-95 and 1995-96 Alumni survey results, (shown in Table 7) we see that alumni responses are similar. They support the claim that the YW•AC experience makes an important impact on Members' lives. The alumni responses are consistent across the last two years, with slightly lower percentages in most categories for the '95-96 group. Marked differences, however, are noted in a few categories. Impact in the career and vocational skills area (60%) was the top response for '95-96 alumni. Personal development rated second highest for '95-96 alumni (43%), whereas it received the highest responses for the '94-95 alumni. Another significant difference was in the area of personal satisfaction from meaningful service, which saw a drop of 43% between the '94-95 and '95-96 alumni responses. Finally, the

education award as a specific impact of service recorded a slight decrease from 15% to 9%, and two of the three negative impacts for '95-96 alumni were related to problems using the education award. It should be clarified that these percentages reflect the Members who specifically indicated the education award as an impact of their service experience, not whether or not the actually used the education award.

**TABLE 7**
**IMPACTS REPORTED BY ALUMNI**

| Impact | 1995-96 (%)N=78 | 1994-95 (%) N=80 |
|---|---|---|
| Personal Development and Life Skills | 43 | 71 |
| Meaningful Service | 17 | 60 |
| Career and Vocational Skills | 60 | 58 |
| Interpersonal and Communication Skills | 22 | 29 |
| Academic Progress and Basic Skills | 19 | 23 |
| Education Awards | 9 | 15 |
| Profound, Life Changing Experience | 13 | 15 |
| Working Towards Community Change | 33 | 29 |
| Negative Experience | 3 | 3 |

The negative impact alumni reported had to do with the difficulties they encountered when they attempted to use their education award. Although only a small percentage of Members in this survey cited the educational award as having a major impact, the education award has been a topic of continual local and national discussion among Members, program directors, state commissions, and the Corporation for National Service in other venues. There are several issues which complicate or even discourage the use of the award. They are:

- The awards are taxed (as income) in the year Members use them, even though the award monies are never paid to the Member but are transferred directly from the Corporation for National Service to the institution holding the loan or charging the tuition.The taxes then cannot be paid out of the award itself and the Member must pay them out his or her net income; this can result in a disproportionate loss of net income.
- There has not been clear enough communication or uniform guidelines from federal and state AmeriCorps administrators regarding legislation and regulation, especially about which loans qualify and/or which educational and financial institutions will

accept the educational award as payment. Members often find out after they have served and have accepted the award that they cannot apply it toward the intended loan or tuition.

- Some lending institutions or educational institutions are not following legislation and guidelines correctly and are not accepting the award when they should.

The Minnesota Commission on National and Community Service has been working to improve communication and understanding within the Corps of the legislation and regulations governing the award as well as to garner legislative support to clarify and simplify the legislation and its application. State and federal legislatures and regulatory bodies should move to resolve issues like the ones mentioned above so that Members can easily use the education award. When these award problems go unresolved, Members subsequently feel that they are penalized for their service.

Of 134 individuals that responded to the 1995-96 Alumni survey, 57% wrote comments regarding the impact their service year had on them. Following are some examples from Members of how their YW•AC experience made a difference in their lives:

> My volunteer experience opened my eyes in the field of domestic violence. I am furthering my education in assisting women and children in domestic violence and trying to promote awareness in this area.
>
> It has helped me to be more responsible in life. It has taught me to also feel good about myself and the work that I do.
>
> It helped me to clarify the career I would like to pursue. It has given me many valuable tools and skills, *i.e.*, working closely with a group of people, office skills, organizational skills.
>
> It has helped me to use my education to help myself and also the community in which I live.
>
> It helped me choose a career as a teacher. It also gave me some of the skills needed to become a teacher.
>
> [It has] impacted my life by giving me ideas of what it is like to work with different people of different cultures. Also...I worked with youth, which means that after my service I will be able to work with anybody.
>
> It provided me with money to continue my education. I also gained valuable experience that will help me gain future employment.

I realized that there are needs in our community and that I have to get involved in order to make a difference and be able to see changes.

It gave me a chance to have a real job with responsibilities other than taking someone's orders. I was able to go to school, get my diploma, and work a worthwhile job. I got certified in CPR, first aid, and went to other seminars that helped me deal with people.

**Education**

Despite the few alumni Members who reported a negative impact with regard to using their education award, both Member exit and alumni survey responses show that YW•AC encourages further education and that the education award continues to be an extremely important component of YW•AC benefits. Ninety-three percent of exiting Members reported that they were likely to continue their education and over two thirds of those same Members reported that their YW•AC experience had influenced their feelings about continuing their education. Very few Members, (13%) received actual educational credit from an educational institution for their service while they were serving. The high school/GED completion rate (as reported by program directors) for Members who entered the program without a high school diploma was 62%. Over half of all exiting Members (56%) intended to continue their education at the college level, another 18% at the graduate level and another 19% at the technical college level. Continuing at these tertiary levels of education at such high rates is in keeping with the fact that 30% of Members already had a high school degree and 54% of the Members had already had some post-secondary education at the time of their enrollment in YW•AC.

Alumni were asked to report on their educational status after leaving the program and their use of the educational award. Over half (59%) of the alumni had already used their education award by six months after the end of their service and another 24% intended to use the award. Table 8 shows a comparison of uses of the education award for '95-96 alumni.

**TABLE 8**
**USE OF EDUCATION AWARD BY 1995-96 ALUMNI**
N=119

| Have used education award... | 59% | Have not used education award yet... | 41% |
|---|---|---|---|
| -to pay off educational loans | 34% | -but intend to use award | 24% |
| -to pay school fees directly | 23% | - and are undecided | 3% |
| - but did not specify how | 1% | -and will not use award | 1% |
| | | -and are not able to use award due to problems with regulations | 4% |
| | | -but did not give a reason | 10% |

Except for those with less than a high school degree and those with a graduate degree, there was minimal change between the level of education that '95-96 Members had at the time they entered their service and the level they reported 6 months after completing their year of service. The number of Members with less than a high school degree decreased and the number of Members with graduate degrees increased. Table 9 shows the distribution of educational levels before and after service for the '95-96 alumni.

**TABLE 9**
**PRE AND POST SERVICE LEVEL OF EDUCATION FOR 1995-96 ALUMNI**

| Level of education | pre service (%) N=127 | post service (%) N=128 |
|---|---|---|
| less than high school degree | 5 | 1 |
| high school degree | 13 | 12 |
| GED | 2 | 2 |
| Technical school | 9 | 7 |
| some college education | 25 | 27 |
| Associate of Arts degree | 6 | 3 |
| Bachelor's degree | 38 | 38 |
| some graduate school | 2 | 3 |
| graduate degree | 1 | 6 |

In addition to the number of alumni Members completing graduate degrees shown in Table 3, enrollment in graduate programs also showed an increase from pre-service (47%) to post-service (56%).

Overall, the data suggest that YW•AC continues to be successful in supporting and encouraging Members to continue their education. The primary connection between YW•AC and continuing education seems to be at the two ends of the continuum -- at the high school/GED completion level on the one hand, and at the university and graduate levels on the other. These conclusions are not surprising given the high-level educational profile of the majority of Minnesota YW•AC Members and the emphasis the program places on securing a GED or high school certificate.

**Employment**

The CNS exit survey does not ask Members about their pre- and post-service employment circumstances so the information reported in this section stems from the alumni surveys only. Alumni Members were asked to indicate the level and kind of employment that they had at the time they began their service and that they secured after their year of service in YW•AC. The figures in Table 10 show that from pre- to post-service there was a decrease in the level of unemployed Members; moreover, the number of Members holding jobs without benefits also decreased. In addition, the number of Members who found full time jobs with benefits after their year of service tripled. It is also important to note that over a third of the respondents chose to enroll in a second year of YW•AC service. Although it cannot be concluded statistically from the data, the responses suggest that a year of YW•AC service provides significant experiences that support an improved level of later employment.

**TABLE 10**
**LEVEL OF EMPLOYMENT FOR 1995-96 ALUMNI**

| Level of Employment | When Began Service N=128 (%) | After Year of Service N=131(%) |
|---|---|---|
| part time no benefits | 38 | 20 |
| part time with benefits | 4 | 2 |
| full time parent at home | 3 | 4 |
| full time no benefits | 27 | 11 |
| full time with benefits | 9 | 26 |
| unemployed | 20 | 6 |
| currently in YW•AC for second year | N/A | 32 |

A majority of the alumni respondents (N=118 or 88%) also indicated the area of employment in which they were working after their first year of service. As mentioned, a third of the Members chose to continue into a second year of YW•AC service. Of the remaining alumni, almost half found post-service employment in social service or community service organizations, followed by employment in educational institutions and the business/industry sector. Table 11 provides a summary of these results.

**TABLE 11**
**AREA OF EMPLOYMENT AFTER FIRST YEAR OF SERVICE**

| Area of employment N=119 | (%) |
|---|---|
| second year of YW•AC service | 32 |
| social service or community service organization | 30 |
| business/industry | 18 |
| educational institution | 11 |
| environmental conservation | 3 |
| government | 1 |
| other | 5 |

**Community Service**

Finally, the YW•AC experience clearly fosters an ethic of community service that reaches beyond the term of service. Ninety percent of exiting Members indicated that their YW•AC experience affected their feelings toward community service and 94% of those same Members

reported that they were likely to continue to volunteer in the future. The 1995-96 alumni survey results also bear out this ethic of service. Excluding the Members who went on to serve a second year of YW•AC, almost half (41%) of '95-96 alumni are continuing to volunteer at least 5 hours per week in their communities. Furthermore, more alumni are volunteering more hours after their YW•AC experience than they typically did before they joined. The number of alumni volunteering at a rate of more than 10-20 hours/week and more than 20 hours/week increased by twofold or more. Table 12 shows the breakdown of volunteer hours for pre- and post-service alumni.

**TABLE 12**
**PRE AND POSTSERVICE VOLUNTEER HOURS FOR 1995-96 ALUMNI**

| Hours of volunteer service per week | Pre service '95-96 alumni (%) N=128 | Post service' '95-96 alumni not re-enrolled in YW•AC for additional year (%) N=89 | Post service all '95-96 alumni (%) N=129 |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0-2.5 | 53 | 45 | 38 |
| more than 2.5-5 | 13 | 13 | 12 |
| more than 5-7.5 | 17 | 13 | 13 |
| more than 7.5-10 | 7 | 8 | 7 |
| more than 10-20 | 2 | 7 | 7 |
| more than 20 | 7 | 13 | 22 |

## COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS[7]

Cost-benefit analysis for 1996-97 covered two major areas. The first was a follow-up to the crime prevention program at Neighborhood House, which has been covered for the preceding two years. The second area of study was the two housing initiatives not studied previously.

[7] The numbers presented are approximate; final calculations may change slightly in the final version.

Project Pride for Living and Habitat for Humanity. These two programs were analyzed for their cost effectiveness in providing housing rehabilitation and their potential for producing long-term volunteer work by Corps Members.

- For crime reduction at Neighborhood House, ratios for Year III in Grid 194 were 0.91 and for the eight grid area was 7.03. The three year weighted average for crime reduction was 2.68.
- For Project Pride for Living the combined cost-benefit ratio was 1.65, including rehabilitation and future volunteer services.
- For Habitat for Humanity the cost benefit ratio was 2.45, including housing construction and future volunteer services.

The average cost-benefit ratio for all the programs studied over the three year period was 2.30. This is well above the estimates made when the original Youth Works•AmeriCorps legislation was proposed, and at the higher ranges of other national cost-benefit studies. This value means state/national service in Minnesota returns $2.30 worth of services for every $1 expended.

The overall cost per Member in 1996-97 is $18,132. This is almost $1000 more than last year's figure, due partially to the increased opportunity costs for Members.

## YEAR 3 EVALUATION FACILITATION PROCESS

Part of the long range plan for the collaboration between the University of Minnesota Evaluation team and the Commission staff was to improve the capacity for self-directed evaluation in YW•AC programs, to give programs the skills to better and more comprehensively evaluate and improve their service and their reporting. Thus in Year Three, we began to move away from a purely external evaluation of the YW•AC to provide training in self directed

evaluation to selected programs. Minnesota is a leader across the nation in this respect. Few if any other state AmeriCorps programs offer evaluation support to program sites apart from the Corporation sponsored training and technical assistance. During the 1996-97 year, three graduate students from the University evaluation team worked as evaluation facilitators at three sites.

In general, the three programs who participated made positive headway toward learning about evaluation practices. At the same time it has been difficult to achieve uniform success in moving programs from evaluation planning, to collecting and analyzing the information, to using it for program improvement and reporting. There are a few reasons for this. In all three programs there were key participants (either directors, Members, or site supervisors) who had to move away from misunderstandings and distrust of evaluation toward a more positive view of evaluation. Evaluation team Members spent much time facilitating a greater understanding of the purpose and utility of evaluation. Second, integrating evaluation into the regular loop of program delivery (requiring a commitment of directors', Members', and supervisors' time and resources ) was a challenge as "doing evaluation" was often seen as competing for already stretched time and resources. Third, participants had to learn a variety of roles and evaluation skills; in some cases this meant improving pre-evaluation skills like writing, problem solving, and critical thinking. So the process was complex, complicated, and required much more time than anticipated. In the end, however, all three sites made significant progress in evaluation practices. Two of the sites have remained closely involved with the University evaluation team activities. In addition, three more programs have made a commitment to work with the team in Year Four and still other programs or individual sites are more frequently seeking out assistance from the evaluation team on an ad hoc basis.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Generally, the results presented indicate that the Minnesota YW•AC continues to be a positive force in the state, and that the service program remains good public policy. The major emphasis in service delivery continues to be in the areas of education and the environment. In the 1996-97 program year, communities received the benefit of more hours of service and more individuals were served in most of the areas of activity this year: education and youth development, urban and rural environmental beautification and conservation, health services, job skill development, community strengthening, and recruitment of non-YW•AC volunteers. In addition, volunteer services provided a return rate of more than 2.5:1 in terms of the actual dollars invested in the program.

Some changes in the Member demographics have important implications. The change in age toward an older, more educated population increases the total cost per Member; there is a cost incentive to continue to recruit and sustain younger, less educated, at-risk Members in addition to the gains those Members experience in education, personal development, work, and civic participation. While dominated by a White majority, the program continues to maintain a diverse group of Members compared to the overall state population distribution. Clearly, however, the issue of recruiting and maintaining non-White Members in the Corps should be a focus for future policy formation at both the state and program levels. The data indicate that there is a relationship between race, gender, and education level on the one hand and the type of termination on the other. This is consistent with the fact that some of the programs with higher rates of early termination for cause are also programs with higher percentages of non-White Members and Members with a high school diploma/GED or less. However, the relationships

should be further explored in detail so that policy can be developed which addresses specific retention issues.

Other factors aside from race, gender, and educational level also need to be investigated further and the possibility of an interaction between them. For example, the major reasons Members themselves gave for leaving the program were 1) personal reasons (41%) which a few Members elaborated as health problems, pregnancy, family problems, insufficient financial resources, or an excessive time commitment required by YW•AC; 2) got a job or working hours were expanded (31%); and 3) schooling commitments (14%). The high number of Members who left for personal reasons suggests that either the local programs, or the national system as a whole, are not as responsive to individual needs (whatever those are) as they might be. This was a concern noted in the previous two reports and may be an indirect indication of the relationship between race, levels of education, programs, and the type of service termination.

Further, the number of volunteers who left for new jobs or increased working opportunities suggests three things. First, it suggests that the stipend cannot compete with other economic opportunities to retain Members in service. Second, Members report that their YW•AC experience significantly aids them in securing employment or better employment. Thus, by the valuable experience it offers, the program may be indirectly contributing to the attrition of Members by giving them the skills which made them attractive to and attracted to other higher paying employers. Third, if YW•AC encourages its Members to complete or attain higher levels of education, and more than 10% of Members report that they leave for that reason, then again the program is indirectly encouraging Members to leave, but for a positive reason. This means that a turnover rate among Members of roughly 30% may be an unavoidable, but not necessarily

undesirable occurrence. Equally important to reiterate is that until a more sophisticated analysis can be undertaken, reports such as this one can only provide a glimpse into who leaves, and who completes the program.

In contrast to the 34% of enrolling Members that left, the 66% who completed their service showed that serving in a YW•AC program continues to have a significant impact on Members in their post-service lives. YW•AC consistently nourishes the personal development of citizens, and facilitates the understanding of one's community, especially with regard to coming to know those who are different from oneself, be it in race, social class, ethnicity, religion, or educational level, etc. Furthermore, YW•AC supports the creation of a highly educated public both in terms of the support given to the intrinsic value of education and in helping to offset the financial costs of realizing that educational value. In addition, service in YW•AC cultivates individuals who are better qualified and who have a proven record of on-the-job performance. This makes for a more competent work force which will ultimately contribute to maintaining a strong economy.

Beyond the skills, education, and employability that YW•AC nurtures, it fosters an ethic of service that former Members carry with them after their experience. In an era of tight economic markets yoked to diminishing levels of charitable giving among the middle class majority, reprioritizing stewardship of the community is very important. YW•AC clearly instills in its former Members a commitment to continue to serve their community as a regular part of their civic life.

Part of improved information gathering about all of these aspects as well as others, should ideally stem from programs' progress in conducting self-directed evaluation. This report has

argued that programs need to make a concerted effort to incorporate self-evaluation into their regular programming cycle. Although that process takes time, dedication, initial external support, and constant internal commitment, the knowledge that Members, directors, and site supervisors receive about the impact of their programs is invaluable for program improvement. Moreover, that knowledge helps sustain better reporting by the programs and in turn by the Commission staff. Thus, promoting more comprehensive and better self-evaluation continues to be an important part of the leadership responsibilities of the Commission staff, and of the responsibilities of individual program directors.

In closing, there are a number of recommendations that we offer for the Commission to consider:

1. decide what kind and level of sophistication of information the Commission needs regarding the demographics, retention, and impact of service of Members
2. develop accordingly policies to address specific demographic/retention issues related to program, race/ethnicity, education level, gender, and Member-cited reasons for leaving
3. formulate policies regarding the mix of age and educational levels desired in the Corps and develop recruitment and support strategies accordingly
4. continue to clarify and communicate to programs the Commission's and the CNS expectations regarding program evaluation and reporting, but especially among site supervisors
5. continue to improve lines of communication between levels of the system, especially where evaluation and reporting are concerned
6. actively encourage the momentum for self-directed evaluation
7. improve the Commissions and the programs' understanding of programs' needs which enable them to carry out program evaluation
8. more clearly define and support director and staff responsibilities, organizational systems, and time *vis a vis* host organizations so that evaluation as well as all other AmeriCorps duties can be accomplished successfully
9. continue to improve systems for placement matches between sites and Members
10. monitor and evaluate more closely Member placement at sites
11. continue the strong emphasis on and programmatic support for Member development in areas of educational attainment, employment skills, and ethic of service

MINNESOTA
DEPARTMENT OF

# *Childr n Families Learning*

## MISSION

*"Increasing the capacity of Minnesota communities to measurably improve the well being of children and families."*

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Printed on recycled paper with a minimum of 10% post consumer waste.

**March 1998**

# YOUTH WORKS• AMERICORPS

# REPORT

Report
to the
Legislature

as required by
M.S. 121.701, Subd. 3

## YOUTH WORKS •AMERICORPS REPORT

**M.S. 121.701 Subdivision 3**

### 1997 Streams of Service Annual Report

This publication provides information that the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning does not collect as a part of its normal business functions. It was therefore necessary to gather and analyze information in order to prepare this report. Therefore, the cost of preparing this publication includes estimates of MN Children information collection costs as well as the estimated costs of the design and printing process. This publication is distributed to 2500 individuals and organizations.

**Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning Costs:**

The following is an estimate of the cost incurred by the Minnesota Department of Children, Families & Learning: $6,839

**Other Agency Costs:**

The following is an estimate of the cost incurred by these agencies: $ 0

**TOTAL ESTIMATED COST FOR PREPARING THIS REPORT:** $6839

# Minnesota Streams of Service

MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF

*Children, Families & Learning*

YOUTH WORKS

# Report

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# Collaboration

## MINNESOTA COMMISSION ON NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Minnesota Streams of Service

Minnesota Commission on National & Community Service

Learn & Serve America · Youth Works • AmeriCorps · AmeriCorps* VISTA · National Directs · Challenge Awards · National Senior Service

February, 1998

In a world that sometimes seems dominated by persons who are "takers" rather than "givers" it is helpful to see how the idea and practice of service to others can be a happy contagion; once acquired it lasts for a lifetime.

By providing encouragement to, and opportunity for, service that extends from grade school through one's very senior years the Minnesota Commission on National and Community Service serves the entire state and the nation.

Some highlights of the Minnesota Commission during this past year include:

Expanded service in all streams, including K-12, Higher Education and Senior Service;

Sponsored a Streams of Service conference on community assets and held a successful Mentor conference through the Minnesota Mentor Network;

Received grant awards for eleven state AmeriCorps programs and gained legislative approval for continued Youth Works funding;

Contributed flood recovery assistance through AmeriCorps and VISTA;

Led "the Streams" in a process for the future, resulting in a Unified State Plan for the next three years.

The mainstay of the Minnesota Commission since its inception in 1994 has been its Director, Mary Jo Richardson. A tireless worker, who combines a profound knowledge of how state offices and departments work with a deep commitment to an ethic of service, she has kept the Commission on track and moving forward. The members of the Commission, the volunteers, the communities they serve and the State as a whole are deeply indebted to her.

Sincerely,

Charles Anderson

Dr. Charles Anderson, Chairperson
Minnesota Commission on National and Community Service



Department of Children, Families & Learning, 113 Capitol Square, 550 Cedar Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-2273
Phone (612) 297-1703 FAX (612) 296-3348 TDD (612) 297-2094

# PROMOTING STREAMS OF SERVICE

*1997*

## Vision

Minnesotans of all ages and backgrounds will practice the ethic of community service as an essential part of citizenship, thereby improving the quality of life in Minnesota.

## Mission Statement

The Minnesota Commission on National and Community Service promotes and supports community service and service-learning for Minnesotans engaged in all Streams of Service through resource development, public relations and outreach, training and evaluation and continuous improvement of programs.

## The Commission established five overall goals:

- Unite Minnesota's service traditions with the ongoing national service movement.
- Engage citizens and Minnesota institutions in strengthening communities and addressing community issues.
- Link all Streams of Service through communications, training and support.
- Continue state leadership in community service and service learning programs that meet quality standards.
- Integrate service-learning with work-based learning as part of Minnesota's education reform.

## Minnesota Commission Representatives

Appointed by the Governor, the Minnesota Commission is a non-partisan board, with members representing youth, educators, labor, business, community groups and government agencies. 1996–1997 Representatives include:

Dr. Charles Anderson, *Chairperson*
Mary Noble, *Vice-Chairperson*
Ellen Albee,
Erin Bowley
Susan Callahan
Cy Carpenter
John Hustad
Marlys Johnson
Terri Keacher
Jim Kielsmeier
Jennifer Merriman
Gene McArthur
Harry Melander
Rockwell Muck
Elise Nelson

**Ex-Officio Members**
Tracy Beckman
Andy Dawkins
Janet Entzel
Larry Fonnest
Robert Jackson
Dean Larson
Gene Piccolo
Martha Robertson
Kathy Sweeney
Charles Williams

**Alternate Members**
Ruth Bures
Earl Eames
Chuck Coskran
Ann Jaede
Mark Langseth
Vicki McKay
Jennifer O'Rourke
Nancy Walters

## Mary Jo Richardson

*served as the Executive Director of the Minnesota Commission on National and Community Service from 1994 to 1997. Mary Jo advanced the partnership of Youth Works • AmeriCorps, into being a full time service corps in Minnesota. She has worked with the Minnesota Commission, through the Department of Children, Families and Learning to strengthen youth development and community service and volunteer activities in the state of Minnesota.*

*Mary Jo retired from her position with the Minnesota Commission in December 1997 to pursue other interests related to the field of service-learning.*

*Thank you Mary Jo Richardson for your outstanding dedication to youth development and Minnesota communities.*

# Partnership

## STREAMS OF SERVICE

### 1997 REPORT

Minnesota Streams of Service

*Streams of service,*

*flowing through each lifetime,*

*tributaries to a deep and mighty river*

*that will continue to swell*

*as our nation enters the 21st century...*

## The Corporation for National Service

The Corporation for National Service was created as a result of the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993. The act combined the operations of the White House Office of National Service, the Commission on National and Community Service, ACTION and the National Civilian Community Corps. The Corporation for National Service supports a wide range of national and community service programs that provide opportunities to Americans of all ages.

CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL SERVICE

## Minnesota Office of Citizenship and Volunteer Service

Minnesota Office of Citizenship and Volunteer Service (MOCVS) strengthens Minnesota communities through leadership, service and promotion of volunteerism.

MOCVS

The resource organization sponsors the Governor's Volunteer Award Program, provides technical assistance and distributes publications, including an annual volunteer recognition promotion packet.

## Minnesota School-to-Work

The Minnesota School-to-Work Initiative is based on the conviction that true success can come only through active, creative partnerships that reflect the involvement of all citizens and employers.

MINNESOTA SCHOOL TO WORK

Preparing all Minnesotans for Tomorrow's Careers

As young people move toward adulthood they are expected to become contributing members of the community, helping and respecting their fellow citizens. Experiences gained through School-to-Work activities will underline the importance of this role and prepare learners to assume their civic and community responsibilities.

In short, learners will come to know and appreciate the way volunteerism contributes to creating the qualities we seek in our communities and that giving back is a primary obligation of all community members.

*Minnesota School-to-Work is a joint initiative of the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning, Minnesota Workforce Center System and Minnesota State Colleges and Universities.*

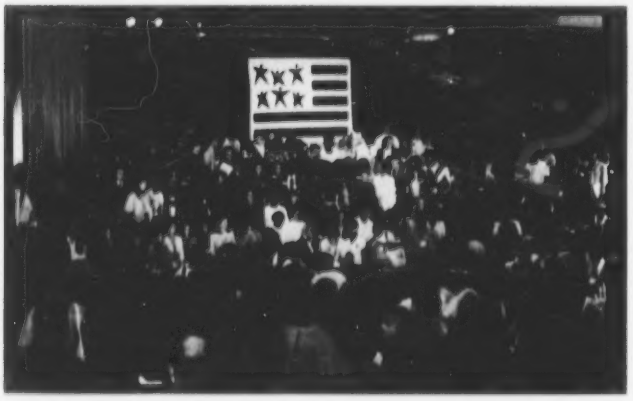
*Minnesota Service Programs*

## *President's Summit for America's Future*

The President's Summit for America's Future was held in April of 1997. Dr. Reatha Clark King participated in the Summit, along a state delegation and two teams from the cities of Minneapolis and Moorhead.

Minnesota representatives left the conference with a challenge to make life better for 2 million kids by the year 2000, focused around five priorities:

***Mentor Protect Nurture Teach/Learn Serve***



*"The most inspiring moment at the summit for me was the youth seminar, when young people presented some powerful and memorable messages which I will never forget.*

*Because of the summit, there will be a greater mobilization of resources and attention focused on the needs of children and youth. The summit served to get all regions moving faster on this agenda and gave local communities new ideas and ways to work on this agenda."*

*(reprinted from the Giving Forum, Summer, 1997)*

*From this has come the*

## *Minnesota Alliance with Youth*

**Fulfilling America's Promise:**
*Mentor/Protect/Nurture/Teach & Learn/Serve*

***Minnesota's Response***
Minnesota's answer to the call by General Powell and the Presidents' Summit to equip our children and youth with five basic resources.

***Vision***
Minnesota children and youth will be supported by their families and communities in their personal, social, and educational development. As active citizen leaders, they will help create integrated, safe, and healthy communities.

***Mission***
Develop the capacity of Minnesota communities to engage children and youth in reaching their full potential as citizens.

***Communities of Promise***
All communities who partner with the Minnesota Alliance with Youth will be designated as "communities of promise." Using the framework of the Alliance, each will develop its own goals related to the five basic resources.

***1-800-234-6687 or 612-296-4738***

*The Minnesota Commission on National and Community Service is a partner organization of the Minnesota Alliance with Youth.*

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**Dr. Reatha Clark King**
Past Board Member
of the Corporation for National Service
Executive Director, General Mills Foundation

# Profile

## YOUTH WORKS • AMERICORPS

### A PARTNERSHIP OF STATE AND FEDERAL PROGRAMS 1997

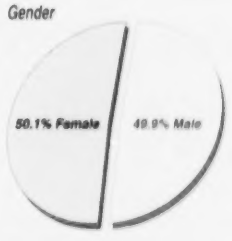
## MINNESOTA YOUTH WORKS
## *Purposes*

- *Renew the ethic of civic responsibility in Minnesota;*
- *Empower youth to improve their life opportunities through literacy, job placement and other essential skills;*
- *Help meet human, educational, environmental, and public safety needs, especially those related to poverty;*
- *Empower government to meet its responsibilities to prepare young people to be contributing members of society;*
- *Prepare a citizenry that is academically competent, ready to work and socially responsible.*

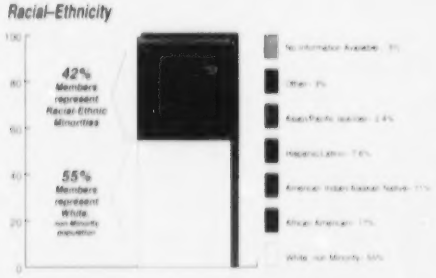
## AMERICORPS
## *Priorities*

- ***Getting Things Done***
- ***Strengthening Communities***
- ***Encouraging Responsibility***
- ***Expanding Opportunity***

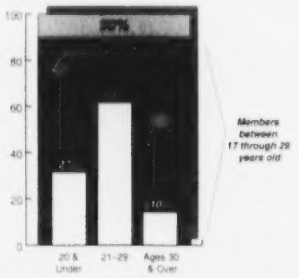
*Gender*



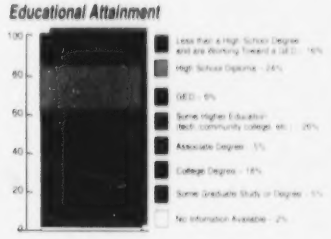

*Racial-Ethnicity*




*Age*




*Educational Attainment*



| *1997 Youth Works • AmeriCorps* | *Federal $* | *State $* |
|---|---|---|
| **Youth Works • AmeriCorps Member Support Costs** | | |
| Stipends, Workmen's Comp, FICA, Training | 1,620,554.00 | 1,600,000.00 |
| **Special Member Costs** | | |
| Childcare, Uniforms, Equipment, etc. | | 50,000.00 |
| *Local Program Operational Costs | | |
| Staff Salaries, Training, Travel, Supplies, etc. | 1,311,659.00 | 0.00 |
| **State Administration** | | |
| Staff Salaries, Travel, Commission | 187,000.00 | 50,000.00 |
| Program Evaluation | | 100,000.00 |
| Program Training | 144,000.00 | 50,000.00 |
| | 3,263,213.00 | 1,850,000.00 |
| **Member Post Service Ed Award** | | |
| 389 Full Time x $4,725 | 1,838,025.00 | 0.00 |
| 103 Part Time x $2,363 | 243,389.00 | 0.00 |
| 492 Total Members | 2,081,414.00 | 0.00 |
| **Total Project Cost** | **$5,344,627.00** | **$1,850,000.00** |
| **Total Project Cost Per FTE** | **$12,244.28** | **$4,238.26** |
| **Total Combined Cost Per FTE** | | **$16,482.54** |

*Budget as approved by the Minnesota Commission on National and Community Service and the Corporation for National Service. Includes participant costs, local operational costs, state administrative and post-service educational award costs.*

# YOUTH WORKS • AMERICORPS MEMBERS

## CONTRIBUTE 675,153 SERVICE HOURS IN 1997

***Youth Works • AmeriCorps Members recruited 24,497 volunteers who donated an additional 152,656 hours of service to their communities.***

***46 members completed their GED or High School Diploma while engaged in Youth Works • AmeriCorps Service.***

***251 individuals completed full time service and 125 individuals completed part time service and earned an Educational Award for Post Secondary Education in 1997.***

### Youth Works • AmeriCorps Major Cost Savings and Impacts:

Reduced criminal activity by youth

Enhanced neighborhood property values

Improved employability of young people who completed their High School Diplomas

Average cost-benefit ratio of Youth Works •AmeriCorps programs studied over three year period is $2.30 in benefits to Minnesota communities for every $1.00 spent.

*Reported by University of Minnesota Cost-Benefit Analysis, January, 1998*

## Contributions to the community and impacts on individuals, organizations and neighborhoods:

***Tutored or taught 31,550 K–12 youth***
- *School readiness*
- *Math*
- *Reading*
- *Language arts*
- *ESL*
- *Community art*
- *Environmental education*
- *Health and safety*
- *Conflict resolution and*
- *Completion of High School diploma*

***Improved the environment of communities, impacting 235,240 individuals***
- *Neighborhood clean-ups*
- *Recycling programs*
- *Tree plantings*
- *Community gardens*
- *Lead abatement programs*

***Presented health education and support services to 10,000 individuals***
- *HIV/AIDS awareness programs*
- *Prenatal health services*
- *Immunization programs*
- *Health care education and support*
- *Independent living assistance*
- *Chemical abuse counseling*

***Served 7700 through community-building activities***
- *Public safety*
- *Graffiti abatement*
- *Community fairs for immigrant populations*
- *Violence awareness programs and*
- *Cross-cultural awareness programs*

***Addressed environmental conservation***
- *Planted 214,538 wildland trees*
- *Removed environmental risks from 137 acres*
- *Cleaned over 35,000 miles of park trail*
- *Restored 256 miles of rivers and beaches*

***Completed Housing related services for more than 7000 individuals***
- *Housing assessments*
- *Weatherization*
- *Construction and rehabilitation of low-income, senior citizen homes and community buildings*

***Addressed Homelessness and Hunger, serving 20,378 families and children***
- *Distribution of food, clothing and toys*
- *Hot meals*
- *Shelter support*

***Organized Out of School Enrichment and Leadership Activities for more than 20,000 youth***
- *Sponsored service-learning activities for 3,135 youth*
- *Mentored 2,000 youth*

***Provided child-care to 1,602 children through programs for early childhood development***
- *Non-English speaking children*
- *School-aged children in women's shelters*
- *Children of teenage parents*

***Assisted 5,629 adults in job-skill and business development programs and taught 1,384 adults through GED instruction, parenting and citizenship classes***

- Reported in the University of Minnesota Youth Works • AmeriCorps Evaluation Report, January 1998
- Aggregated Data based on Reports of Individuals directly benefiting from MN Youth Works • AmeriCorps Service

# Youth Works • AmeriCorps

## FLOOD RELIEF PROJECT

JUNE 1997

### State Corps Crookston/ East Grand Forks Flood Relief Project

More than 350 Members spent two days providing assistance to the families, community organizations, and relief workers in the region.

As a 350 strong team, the Youth Works • AmeriCorps was able to provide support in every aspect of the relief effort from demolition and clean-up, to distribution of relief supplies, to child care, to meal preparation, to emotional support.

The experience cemented a statewide esprit de corps. The Corps presence underscored the ethic of service that defines citizens in the state of Minnesota. For all Youth Works • AmeriCorps participants the event was a touchstone experience.

### One Story from the Flood Service Project:

*"One of our weatherization crews participated in the flood relief effort in East Grand Forks and Crookston. While the entire program from around the state accomplished big things, it was this small crew who made a human connection with a home owner and her son who not only felt the ravaging of the flood but had also lost their husband and father to cancer the previous fall. The crew provided their skills as well as instruction of their skills to the home owner. One bedroom was mudded and taped, one bedroom and bathroom were sheet rocked and, one bedroom partially sheet rocked and paneling hung in the family room. The crew carried items from the garage so the homeowner could sort through to salvage family belongings and mementos. The crew knew the sense of accomplishment through community when they left this project."*

Cindy Brey
Employment and Training
MN Serve
Youth Works • AmeriCorps
Director

Joyce Essinger
MN Serve
Site Coordinator

# Programs

## CITY OF LAKES

### MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS / COMMUNITY EDUCATION • 1997 REPORT

### *Getting Things Done:*

516 pre-school through 12th graders increased learning in academic areas of reading, English, writing, math, science and arts, as documented through tracking tools and teacher assessments.

Tutored and prepared 358 adult learners for the GED exam. 75% obtained their GED, passed U.S. Citizenship exams and improved their reading skills by first grade level.

1,347 youth participated in recreation, arts and leadership activities sponsored by City of Lakes Youth Works • AmeriCorps Members.

Developed and built a Community Fitness Trail, collaborating with the Prudential Company and YMCA.

**Members:** 22 Full Time
6 Part Time

**Area Served:**
Minneapolis Communities including North, Northeast, and Phillips

**Description:**
City of Lakes Corps exists to improve the school success of Minneapolis youth through educational support, leadership opportunities and community collaboration. Close to 20,000 service hours were devoted toward academic support for youth and adults in Minneapolis during 1997.

Corps members tutor, organize after-school activities and sponsor public safety, conflict resolution and English programs for children and youth. City of Lakes provides leadership and promotes active citizen participation in Minneapolis neighborhoods.

**Partner Agencies:**
Courage Center
Franklin Learning Center
Humphrey Institute of Public Achievement
Minneapolis Kids
Minneapolis Public Schools/Community Education
- Anderson School/Community Education
- Hale Elementary School
- Jenny Lind Elementary School
- Lehmann Center Volunteer Program
- North Star School/Community Education
- Northeast Middle School

Southside Family School
YMCA of Metropolitan Minneapolis
- Emma B. Northeast YMCA
- Hiawatha YMCA
- North Community YMCA
- University YMCA

YWCA of Minneapolis
- Downtown
- Ruth Hawkins
- Pratt Community Center

*"The presence of City of Lakes AmeriCorps members provided children with stability and individual attention."*

Melinda McKay
Jenny Lind Elementary School

# CITY OF SAINT PAUL • FUTURE FORCE

## 1997 REPORT

### Getting Things Done:

Tutored 1,150 learners which resulted in an increase in math skills by 32%, vocabulary skills by 35% and spelling skills by 50%.

Mentored 1,178 students including 301 "at risk for academic failure" youth.

Members directed the Frogtown Free and Smart after-school and summer club. Developed 24 after school activities for more than 1,112 children and youth.

Organized the Random Acts of Kindness parade during the St. Paul Frogtown Reclaim Your Community Month, a neighborhood event to reduce violence.

Assembled book collections and maintined libraries for 1,650 students.

Taught GED or basic skills development to 100 adults.

*"Without the support of the members and their ability to recruit adult volunteers, we would not have been able to keep the program going during this hectic time."*

Anne Simerson
Director of McDonough
Recreation Center

**Members:** 21 Full Time
12 Part Time

**Areas Served:**
St. Paul Neighborhoods

**Description:**
Future Force teams serve at twenty-seven school and community sites throughout St. Paul. Members offer direct services to children, teens and adults; including child care, one-on-one small group tutorial services, after-school programs and gang intervention. Members take lead roles in community initiatives and large service projects.

**Community Partners:**
Camp Fire Boys & Girls
City of St. Paul
Como Conservatory
Concordia College
Educational Talent Search
Inner City Youth League
LEAP English Academy
Merrick Community Services
Metropolitan State University
MN Children's Museum
Naomi Family Center
Safe Zone
Saint Paul Public Schools
Street Works
Thomas Dale Block Club
University of St. Thomas
Amherst H. Wilder Foundation
Youth Express
Youth Service Community Initiative
YWCA of St. Paul

# MINNESOTA CONSERVATION CORPS

## 1997 REPORT

### Getting Things Done:

Provided the leadership and organized volunteers to address flood disaster areas in Minnesota areas hardest hit by the 1997 spring floods.

Removed 500 tons of debris and hazardous wastes from flood-ravaged rivers in Crookston and East Grand Forks.

Recruited 5,820 non-AmeriCorps member volunteers who contributed 48,432 hours of volunteer service.

MCC teamed with the Target Corporation and local volunteers to rid a St. Paul river area of a 57,000 pounds of old scrap.

Planted nearly 160,646 trees, improving state forests and public parks.

Constructed environmental education classrooms in six school forests benefiting 1,000 rural high schools.

**Members:** 101 Full Time
12 Part Time

**Description:**
The Minnesota Conservation Corps (MCC) has a long-standing tradition of working hard to protect natural resources related to forests, fisheries, trails, parks and waterways. MCC has linked with Youth Works • AmeriCorps to better address the environmental quality of low-income communities and to strengthen support for Corps members. Crews are located at many sites; five regional centers are located in Grand Rapids, Bemidji, Brainerd, Rochester and the Twin Cities.

*"We cannot find the words to express our gratitude for the diligence you showed our community during our time of need."*

Emergency Operations Center
Coordinator, Warren, Minnesota

*"The service and work our crews did in Northwestern Minnesota during the floods, gave us a different outlook on life."*

Tim Rath
Youth Works/AmeriCorps Member
and Forestville Crew Supervisor

# MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY • MN SERVE

## 1997 REPORT

### Getting Things Done

Tutored and assisted more than 2300 school children, resulting in improved reading and math skills, better task completion and an improved willingness to learn.

Assisted 330 low-income families and 1,300 individuals to improve their awareness of housing, job and community resources.

Identified support needs for more than 1,000 clients, benefiting children and families in domestic abuse situations.

Delivered child care and support services to 1,110 pre-school children.

Renovated Camp Friendship, used by 4,000 people annually, and constructed a Wildlife Refuge boardwalk to be used by up to 5,000 people annually.

Improved living conditions for people in subsidized housing: repaired 6 community buildings for 5,180 residents, located housing for 141 homeless persons and completed home renovations.

**Members:** 51 Full Time
49 Part Time

**Area Served:** Statewide

**Description:**
The Minnesota Department of Economic Security (MDES) Youth Works • AmeriCorps program represents the activities of fifteen sites including Service Delivery Areas, Private Industry Councils and Community Action Programs.

The MDES program targets, as participants, economically disadvantaged and "at-risk" youth. A majority of participants are high school dropouts and have basic skills deficiencies, while many participants also have learning disabilities. Many of the youth are at-risk of involvement with the juvenile justice system, have struggled with substance abuse issues and are pregnant or parenting. This year, while serving in their communities, 39 members obtained their General Education Degrees.

Members serve as school tutors and mentors and after-school program supervisors. Others assist with housing construction and renovation and participate in environmental projects.

**Community Partners:**
Anoka County Community Action
Anoka County Job Training Center
Bi-County Community Action Program
Consortium/Carver-Scott Educational Cooperative
Dakota County Employment and Economic Assistance
Duluth Job Training Programs
Hennepin/Scott Carver Counties Employment and Training
Inter-County Community Council
Minneapolis Employment and Training/Loring-Nicollet-Bethlehem Community Centers
Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training
Private Industry Council 5
Southwest Minnesota Private Industry
Stearns-Benton Employment and Training Council
Tri-Valley Opportunity Council
Twin Cities Tree Trust
Washington County Job Training
Western Community Council

*"I help the students in the kindergarten and first grade classes. I lead activities and stations—the students are really enjoyable to work with. I am considering becoming a teacher's aide after I get my GED diploma."*

Angela Gillett,
MN Serve Youth Works • AmeriCorps

# MULTICULTURAL COMMUNITIES IN ACTION (MCA) NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE

## 1997 REPORT

### Getting Things Done

Counseled more than 500 people about substance abuse prevention and/or related issues.

Tutored 677 at-risk students at an alternative junior and senior high school.

Directed support and instructional activities for 285 adults, enhancing their community success and bicultural readiness.

Recycled 16,441 pounds of debris during the neighborhood clean-up.

Provided tutoring, mentoring and multicultural enrichment activities to 540 school aged youth, improving school performance. Activities included home visits to Spanish speaking families to support families becoming involved in their children's education.

Coordinated community involvement and recreational activities for 1,298 youth, providing positive outlets for youth.

Increased language skills for 163 adults through support group and instructional activities, assisting them to function bicultural. Hmong, Khmer and Spanish-speaking members teach English speaking skills to Hmong, Cambodian and Spanish families.

Taught more than 200 preschool children through multicultural enrichment activities, improving school readiness.

**Members:** 20 Full Time
14 Part Time

**Area Served:** West Side of St. Paul

**Description:**
MCA strengthens the capacity of West side organizations and assists the community to meet its own needs through Youth Works • AmeriCorps. Members create and teach multicultural curriculum for students preschool to high school, sponsor activities to reduce gang interaction, tutor and mentor and provide leadership in neighborhood projects.

**Community Partners:**
Minnesota Hispanic Education Project
Casa de Esperanza
Chicanos, Latinos Unidos en Servicio (CLUES)
Guadelupe Area Project
University of St. Thomas – Hispanic PreCollege Project
Common Bond Communities
Big Brothers & Sisters
Boys & Girls Club
Safe Neighborhood Council
Tedro del Pueblo
Teens Networking Together
de Colores
Neighborhood House
West Side Citizens Organization

*The AmeriCorps program is a great partnership with the Hispanic Pre-College Project. The members have been able to build relationships and allow our program to reach more students and their families.*

Carmen Guzman
University of St. Thomas
Hispanic PreCollege Project, St. Paul

# PILLSBURY NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES

## 1997 REPORT

### Getting Things Done:

2,749 inner-city youth further developed their skills via involvement in a variety of AmeriCorps Pillsbury Neighborhood Services (APNS) member sponsored youth service initiatives including:

Providing structure for 2,216 youth in ongoing after school sports, arts, academic and leadership activities,

Improving 277 elementary school student's English conversational and written skills,

Increasing 256 adolescents' awareness of preventing HIV and STDs.

1,229 low-income, inner city adults gained access to a continuum of APNS member-sponsored services that fostered greater self-sufficiency including: food, clothing, housing, chemical abuse assessments, jobs, tax assistance, legal assistance, support groups and more.

295 adult immigrants improved conversational and written English skills in APNS member-sponsored ESL classes, and 54 additional adults made progress in obtaining their U.S. citizenship status via APNS citizenship classes.

APNS developed a partnership with Augsburg College that provides up to $20,000 scholarships to pursue under graduate studies at Augsburg. This opportunity is available to all AmeriCorps members serving in the United States.

*"Serving food, is like serving the community, for with every spoonful of care and commitment you not only fill stomachs, you fill hearts."*
LaKisha McGaney

**Description**
AmeriCorps Pillsbury Neighborhood Services' 32 FTE multicultural members strengthen their communities via a myriad of youth development and adult self-sufficiency initiatives at 11 diverse sites. APNS members engage inner-city youth in a multitude of enrichment programs at community centers and schools, and provide a continuum of support services to adults including operating food shelves, coordinating tax assistance programs, and teaching ESL and Citizenship classes. APNS employs a variety of strategies to develop members' leadership skills and creates partnerships to leverage additional member benefits.

**Members:** 29 Full Time
6 Part Time

**Areas Served:**
Minneapolis Inner City Neighborhoods

**Community Partners:**
American Indian OIC
Brian Coyle Community Center
Chicanos, Latinos Unidos en Servicio (CLUES)
Confederation of the Somali Community in MN
District 202
Heart of the Beast Theater
Holland School
Jefferson School
Little Earth Housing Authority
Pillsbury House
PYC Alternative School

# PARTNERS IN SERVICE TO AMERICA
# RED LAKE TRIBAL COUNCIL
## 1997 REPORT

### Getting Things Done:

Provided services for elderly, isolated people: delivered more than 350 meals, conducted 220 home visits, carried out essential transportation services and coordinated recreational activities.

Planted over 4,000 trees, cleaned Interpretive Trails.

Collaborated with the Department of Natural Resources in Project Grow; a community garden activity which fosters improved nutrition for individuals with health concerns.

Sponsored community events with local partners to reduce violence, cut down on drug and alcohol use and improve the environment.

Fighting the flood, Crookston members assisted with emergency aspects of the relief work, including food preparation, child care and supply distributions.

**Members:**

| | |
|---|---|
| Red Lake | 44 Full Time |
| Bois Forte | 24 Full Time |
| Crookston | 10 Full Time |

**Description:**
Partners in Service to America consists of three clusters: Red Lake, Bois Forte and Crookston. Corps members provide direct service through tutoring and parenting activities, substance abuse education, life skills training and after-school activities. Members act as mentors and leaders to children and youth in their community and often assist with community events and projects.

*"The relationship with the AmeriCorps member impacted this child. It motivated him to want to learn while in school."*

Youth Works • AmeriCorps
Site Supervisor

**Community Partners:**
Red Lake, Bois Forte, Crookston School Districts
Red Lake and Bois Forte Department of Natural Resources
Red Lake Substance Abuse Program
Red Lake Housing Authority
Bois Forte Elderly Nutrition Program
Crookston Migrant School
Crookston Homeless Shelter

# SOUTHERN MINNESOTA

## YOUTH WORKS • AMERICORPS 1997 REPORT

### Getting Things Done:

Provided independent living assistance to over 10,000 adults.

Involved 1,000 K–12 students in service learning activities.

Tutored 200 individuals in English as a Second Language.

Leveraged more than 4,700 community volunteers who contributed over 62,000 hours of service work.

**Members:** 60 Full Time

**Area Served:**
Southeastern & South Central Minnesota

**Description:**
Southern Minnesota is composed of three clusters in Mankato, Rochester and Winona. Clusters collaborate with over thirty local agencies and higher education to meet human, public safety, and educational needs of the community. Services include: providing resources to families in emergency situations, coordinating positive youth activities and assisting people with English language skills. Members are visible leaders in community service projects throughout the year.

**Community Partners:**
Southeastern MN Initiative Fund
Winona State University
Mankato State University
30 + Community Partners

*"I never expected to accomplish so much in one year or to touch so many people and their lives."*

Rosario Preciado
Youth Works • AmeriCorps Member

# TWIN CITIES YOUTH AND HOUSING INITIATIVE

1997 REPORT

## Getting Things Done:

Completed more than 1,400 inner-city housing projects and tasks, including inspections, repair, renovation and painting services.

Assisted with the operation of the community Tool Library and Home Improvement Center, resulting in 613 individuals accessing tools, materials, and instruction.

Served side by side with local residents to improve Minneapolis neighborhoods: planted community gardens, organized block and flood clean-ups.

Rehabilitated 85 to 95 housing units and constructed 21 new homes for low-income families.

**Description:**
Twin Cities Youth and Housing Initiative is a collaboration between three distinct organizations:

Summit Academy OIC,

Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity

and

Project for Pride in Living.

Together, the organizations address community development and coordinate construction services for family housing in the Minneapolis and St. Paul area.

**Twin Cities Youth and Housing**
**Members: 10 Full Time**
**32 Part Time**

***Summit Academy, OIC***
is a program made up of inner-city youth who serve in lead roles in the completion of construction activities, while working toward their high school diploma and job related skills.

***Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity***
provides home ownership opportunities for low-income families and strives to make decent, affordable housing a matter of conscience for all.

***Project for Pride in Living***
assists low and moderate income people to move toward self-sufficiency by addressing their housing, job and neighborhood needs.

*"The Tool Library service is unique and vital because it allows people in the Phillips community–one of the poorest in the city–to rent tools and purchase home improvement items. The Tool Library is a place where community residents feel welcome, not slighted. People appreciate the hospitality and affordability of the Tool Library."*

Twin Cities Youth and Housing
Youth Works • AmeriCorps Member

# VOLUNTEERS IN SERVICE TO AMERICA (VISTA)

## 1997 REPORT

Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) is the national service program that support individuals in communities to help residents become more self-sufficient. Rather than providing direct service, VISTAs strengthen communities by increasing the capability of people to improve their own lives through employment training, literacy programs, housing assistance and neighborhood revitalization. Simply put, VISTAs build capacity not dependency.

VISTA began in 1964. It was connected with the AmeriCorps network of programs through the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993.

**VISTA Services include:**
Recruit tutors and enroll students in adult literacy programs

Provide employment training for refugees and individuals receiving public assistance

Write curriculum for job based training providing non-English speakers the essential communication tools to gain and maintain employment

Develop municipal recycling programs

Recruit mentors for low income children and youth

Increase access and availability of affordable housing

**Highlights of 1996-1997**
AmeriCorps*VISTAs recruited and trained over 300 tutors for and enrolled over 2,000 students in adult literacy programs. Through support of VISTAs, over 250 people passed the GED or other high school graduation equivalent. VISTAs enrolled over 750 youth in a GED or high school alternative diploma program. Community volunteers recruited by VISTAs provided over 13,000 hours of education services.

AmeriCorps • ViSTAs generated $230,000 for housing and economic development initiatives. Through support of VISTAs, over 200 individuals of families were placed in permanent housing and 60 individuals were placed in jobs.

An AmeriCorps • VISTA secured over $60,000 worth of used computer equipment to build a computer lab in Coon Rapids for adults !earning English.

Two AmeriCorps • VISTAs led 120 volunteers in an effort to rehabilitate 17 houses in St. Paul. The city of St. Paul contributed $20,000 and volunteers contributed 800 hours.

In 1996–1997 over 60 VISTAs served throughout the state of Minnesota:

**Program Locations (Statewide):**
Community Design Center
East Side Neighborhood
Hmong American Partnership
Housing Coalition of St. Cloud
Metro North ABE
Minnesota Housing Partnership
MN Literacy Council
Minneapolis Public Schools
Minneapolis Public Libraries
Minneapolis Public Housing Authority
North End Even Start Program
North Hennepin Community College
Project for Pride in Living
SE MN Recycles Exchange
St. Joseph Hope
St. Paul PHA
St. Paul Tenants Union
Amherst H. Wilder Foundation

**Contact:**
Robert M. Jackson, Director
Minnesota State Office
Corporation for National Service
431 South 7th Street, Room 2480
Minneapolis, MN 55415-1854
(612) 334-4083

# Minnesota AMERICORPS NETWORK

1997 REPORT

## YOUTH QUAKE

### Getting Things Done:

After-school programs to involve youth, grades 4–8, at no or low cost to allow participation by diverse groups from communities.

Tutoring of youth during school days and after-school.

Service opportunities offered for members and youth throughout communities.

**Members:** 10 PT

**Description:**
In its second year of operation through the Governor's Initiative Program for Healthy Youth, Youth Quake • AmeriCorps has made an impact in five greater Minnesota locations.

Youth Quake • AmeriCorps program focuses on the developmental needs of youth in rural Minnesota communities: Bemidji, Willmar, Worthington, Red Wing and Virginia. The ten members of Youth Quake involve youth, parents and community members in providing out of school and summer activities.

## NATIONAL AMERICORPS

National AmeriCorps programs include interstate programs. These programs are sponsored through a national organization and are located at sites across the country. Programs are funded on a competitive basis directly through The Corporation for National and Community Service.

***Clear Corps–Coalition for Lead Safe Communities***
Designed to reduce lead poisoning levels in family and community dwellings and to increase awareness and involvement regarding this health issue. Clear Corps is working in St. Paul and Minneapolis neighborhoods.

***AmeriCorps Action for Children***
The Action for Children program places AmeriCorps members in local child care resource and referral agencies. AmeriCorps ACT members provide experiential learning activities, train parents to increase their caring skills and coordinate child care events. Minnesota AmeriCorps members are located in six rural communities.

***Success by Six–United Way of Minneapolis***
AmeriCorps members provide service through community outreach efforts that support families and children in Minneapolis. The Success by Six model brings together business, government, education, health and human services to foster healthy development of children before they are born and until the age of six.

# Seniors

## NATIONAL SENIOR SERVICE CORPS

### 1997 REPORT

The National Senior Service Corps (NSSC) is a network of nearly 20,000 Minnesota seniors (half a million nationwide) who are making a difference through Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions and the Retired and Senior Volunteers Program (RSVP). These programs tap the experience, skills and talents of seniors 55 and older.

Both the Corporation for National Service and the state of Minnesota, through the Minnesota Board of Aging, provide funding for these programs. Important public and private sector support contributes to NSSC projects as well.

To demonstrate the impact older volunteers have on Minnesota communities, the twenty-six Senior Service Corp projects in the state have launched an initiative called "Programming for Impact." Their goal is to describe just how senior volunteers have not only a qualitative impact but a measurable one as well. With increased funding from both the State of Minnesota and federal government through the Corporation for National Service and with increasing local public and private support, the Senior Service Corps is reaching more and more Minnesota communities by engaging senior in service. The Corporation funded a fourth Foster Grandparent program in the state in 1997.

| Program | Volunteer Participants | Hours Served |
|---|---|---|
| *Minnesota Foster Grandparents* | 637 | 492,495 |
| *Senior Companions* | 370 | 250,299 |
| *Retired and Senior Volunteers Program* | 17,349 | 2,035,763 |
| **TOTAL:** | **18,356** | **2,778,557** |

***Minnesota Foster Grandparents***
Minnesota Foster Grandparents offers seniors, ages 60 and older opportunities to serve as mentors, tutors and caregivers for children and youth with special needs. They commonly serve in schools, alternative learning centers, correctional facilities and group homes often reaching and positively influencing youth that no others can.

***Senior Companions***
Senior Companions provide assistance and friendship mostly to the elderly population who are homebound and often, living alone. By taking care of simple chores, Senior Companions often provide the services that frail elderly need to continue living independently, an important note, as nursing home and other costs for institutionalized care continues to increase.

***Retired and Senior Volunteers Program***
Retired and Senior Volunteers Program (RSVP) helps people age 55 and older find volunteer opportunities in their home communities. RSVP matches community needs with seniors' personal interests and makes use of their skills and lifelong experiences. RSVP often teams seniors and youth together through intergenerational service projects. Both individuals named "Outstanding Minnesota Seniors for 1997" are participants in RSVP (RSVP/St.Louis County; RSVP/Crow Wing County).

**Contact:**
Robert M. Jackson, Director
Minnesota State Office
Corporation for National Service
431 South 7th Street, Room 2480
Minneapolis, MN 55415-1854
(612) 334-4083

# School Age

## LEARN AND SERVE • K-12 PROGRAMS

### 1997 REPORT

### *Accomplishments of Learn and Serve America, K–12 programs:*

Increased number of school-age youth engaged in service, particularly those from low-income and high need areas. More than 11,000 youth were involved in community service Learn and Serve programs in 1997, almost doubling participation from the year before.

Trained teachers on service-learning and fostered the integration of service-learning in existing school curriculum.

Expanded the role of youth in service, providing opportunities for youth to act as teachers, trainers and resources to their peers and others in the community.

Linked Graduation Standards to service-learning.

Learn and Serve America, K–12 is a national program that encourages learning by school-age youth through service in their communities.

Learn and Serve America grants are available through the Corporation for National Service for both school and community-based programs.

Service-learning programs engage youth in community challenges, applying principles learned in the classroom in solving real-life problems. Service activities help young people understand the meaning of citizenship and their ability to contribute to the improvement of their communities. Local businesses, non-profits, social service organizations and schools form partnerships to support youth development youth service.

In addition to federal Learn and Serve America programs, state Youth Development/Youth Service programs are located in 290 school districts in Minnesota. In the last eight years the number of youth involved in service has increased to more than 180,000 participants.

In Minnesota Learn and Serve America, K–12 currently provides grants ranging from $5,000 to $10,000 for twenty-five school-based and thirteen community-based programs.

**Community Based Learn & Serve America Programs:**

Big Brothers & Sisters
Camp Fire Boys & Girls – Teens in Action
Carver County – STS Plus Program
First Opportunity
K.I.D.S. Inc.
Metro YMCA
Neighborhood House – West Side Youth Pride
Phillips Community Television
Project Success
Red Wing YMCA
City of Rosemount
Southside Family School
Teens Networking Together

**School Based Learn & Serve America Programs:**

Annandale Public Schools
Bemidji Public Schools
Blaine High School
Blue Earth Public Schools
Cambridge-Isanti Public Schools
Carver-Scott Educational Coop
Central Lakes Educational District
Crookston Public Schools
Eden Prairie Public Schools
Faribault Public Schools
Forest Lake Public Schools
Lac qui Parle Valley Schools
Lakes Country Service Coop
Minneapolis/Alternative Schools
Minneapolis/Harrison School
Minneapolis/Webster
Minnesota New Country School
North St. Paul/Maplewood/Oakdale Schools
Pine City Public Schools
Remer/Longville Public Schools
Rothsay Public Schools
St. Paul/Expo for Excellence
St. Paul/Fresh Force
St. Paul/Hayden Heights
Walker Public Schools

**School Based Programs and Community Based Programs Contact:**

Marlys Bucher
Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning
112 Capitol Square Building
550 Cedar Street
St. Paul, MN 55101
(612) 297-2481
Marlys.Bucher@state.mn.us

# Higher Ed.

## LEARN AND SERVE AMERICA

### 1997 REPORT

The higher education program of Learn and Serve America aims to create collaborations that powerfully impact both college students and communities.

Minnesota Campus Compact and the Minnesota Higher Education Services Office work together to coordinate the grant proposal process and administer Learn and Serve programs. Campus Compact staff provide training and technical assistance to higher education service learning programs in Minnesota.

An estimated 16,000 college students are involved in community service throughout the state; work with children and youth continues to be the most popular form of involvement.

Over 30 colleges and universities in Minnesota have established service-learning programs with full or part-time staff. This is approximately a 25% increase in the past year.

An additional 15 campuses have at least some service programming and/or faculty who integrate service with academic study. Over 300 faculty in Minnesota have revised courses/curricula to include a service-learning component.

Campuses across the state collaborate with community-based organizations to improve life in Minnesota through service, including community mobilization, community-based research, public policy and economic development activities.

20 campus programs currently receive funding from the state of Minnesota and the Corporation for National Service through the Learn and Serve America program. These programs are at public and private, two- and four-year colleges and universities across the state. Each of the funded initiatives is a collaboration between at least one campus and one community-based organization. In some cases, the community organization is managing the program. This type of shared coordination of service-learning is a unique strength of the higher education programs in Minnesota.

***Model Campus-Community Collaborations***

*(funded by the Corporation for National Service)*

Grants to develop intensive campus-community collaborations designed to address a community issue over the long-term through multi-faceted strategies such as community mobilization, volunteerism, and community and economic development.

- Concordia College – Healthy Community Initiative – Moorhead schools
- Gustavus Adolphus College – ISD 508 – St. Peter
- Metropolitan State University – Dayton's Bluff School – local organizations
- University of Minnesota-Morris – local schools – area organizations

**Community Service Work-Study**

*(funded by the Corporation of National Service)*

Grants to create or enhance an accessible, user-friendly system for use of off-campus work-study funds with non-profits and other community-based organizations. Includes several America Reads initiatives.

- Central Lakes College – Brainerd neighborhoods and schools
- College of St. Catherine – University of Minnesota – St. Paul Neighborhood House
- Hamline University – Neighborhood organizations and schools
- Macalester College – East Side Neighborhood Development Company
- University of Minnesota, Morris – Morris Elementary School
- University of St. Thomas – Community organizations and schools
- University YMCA – University of Minnesota – Twin Cities

**Program Improvement**

*(funded by MN Higher Ed Services Office, State of Minnesota)*

Grants to improve the quality, impact and sustainability of existing service-learning or campus-community collaboration initiatives.

- Lexington-Hamline Community Council – Concordia University
- Senior Resources – Normandale Community College
- People Serving People – University of Minnesota Twin Cities
- Salvation Army – Bethel College

**Integrating Service with Academic Study**

*(funded by MN Higher Ed Services Office, State of Minnesota)*

Grants to improve the quality, impact and sustainability of curricular-based service-learning initiatives involving faculty.

- Century College – Family Violence Network
- St. Cloud State University – Community organizations

**Start-Up Programs**

*(funded by MN Higher Ed Services Office, State of Minnesota)*

Grants to help begin new service-learning and campus-community collaboration initiatives.

- College of St. Scholastica – Lincoln Park School – Community organizations
- Itasca Community College – Local non-profit organizations – ISD 318
- Lake Superior College – Duluth Central High School

**Contact**

Erin Bowley, Minnesota Campus Compact (612) 962-4952
Suite 25-H-425, 1000 LaSalle Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55403-2005

Nancy Walters, Higher Education Services Office (612) 296-9777
550 Cedar Street, St. Paul, MN 55101

# State

## MINNESOTA MENTOR NETWORK

### 1997 REPORT

The Minnesota Mentor Network promotes mentoring for youth and families, provides information and acts as a communication link for Minnesota mentor programs.

The Network publishes an annual directory of individual mentor programs, by region and coordinates a statewide conference for coordinators of youth and family mentor programs.

This year the Minnesota Mentor Network sponsored the "Weaving Mentoring into the Fabric of Our Communities" conference. Twin Cities One to One was a co-sponsor for the conference. Several hundred people representing mentor organizations across the state participated in the full day of mentoring and related seminars.

*The Minnesota Mentor Network is a partner organization with the Minnesota Alliance with Youth.*

**Contact:**
MN Commission on National and Community Service
Department of Children, Families and Learning
115 Capitol Square Building
550 Cedar Street
St. Paul, MN 55101

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# Collaboration

## Minnesota Commission on National and Community Service

***For information on Minnesota AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve, K–12, Mentor Network and Streams of Service Programs, call***

(612) 297-1703
Voice Message Line:
(612) 296-4073 (in Twin Cities and Out of State)
1-888-234-1270 (Toll Free for use in Minnesota)

*Office of Life Work Development, Department of Children, Families & Learning*
550 Cedar Street
St. Paul, MN 55101-2273
Web Page Address:
www.children.state.mn.us/stw/community

## Corporation for National Service: Minnesota Office

***For information on VISTA, Minnesota Senior Service Corps, call***

431 South 7th Street, Room 2480
Minneapolis, MN 55415-1854
(612) 334-4083

## Corporation for National Service

***For information on the AmeriCorps National Network and National Service programs, call***

1-800-942-2677
1-800-833-3722

## Minnesota Campus Compact

***For information on Learn and Serve Higher Education***

1000 LaSalle Avenue, Suite 25-H-425
Minneapolis, MN 55403-2005
(612)962-4952

## Minnesota Office of Citizenship and Volunteer Services (MOCVS)

Department of Administration
117 University Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55155-2200
612-296-4731
1-800-234-6687

## Minnesota Alliance With Youth

117 University Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55155-2200
612-296-4738

## Minnesota School-to-Work Intiative

*Minnesota Department of Children, Families & Learning*
Office of LifeWork Development
Capitol Square Building, 550 Cedar Street
St. Paul, MN 55101-2273
(612) 296-2960
1-888-234-5120
Web Page Address: cfl.state.mn.us/stw/

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MINNESOTA
DEPARTMENT OF

# *Childr n Families Learning*

## MISSION

*"Increasing the capacity of Minnesota communities to measurably improve the well being of children and families."*

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